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Sydney Rayner, Gibsons Trio

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MARK OSIPOVICH REIZEN



The RECORD COLLECTOR

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MARK REIZEN – RUSSIAN BASS EXTRAORDINARY

by Norman Linnell

I was prompted to write this article on Mark Reizen because it seems to me absurd that the most revered bass in Russia after the legendary Chaliapin should be almost unknown (except by isolated collectors) outside his native land. As the records abundantly demonstrate, he possessed one of the most beautiful bass voices ever recorded – a rare tonal beauty preserved well into his fifties and beyond – and a polished, generally restrained style of singing as moving as Chaliapin's although totally different from the great Russian extrovert. Wherever the needle falls on any of his records there is never a hint of shouting. He was, I suppose, more in the style of Sibriakov and Kastorsky than Chaliapin but an attentive ear will readily appreciate that on records at least he eclipses them both in beauty of tone and smoothness of emission. What many people do not know is that Reizen was almost an exact contemporary of Kipnis and Pinza, born in 1895 as against their 1891 and 1892 respectively, and he certainly outlasted them both in the preservation of his noble organ.

Mark Osipovich Reizen was born on 21st June (3rd July) 1895 at the village of Zaitsevo in the Ukraine, near the railway junction Nikitova, a place notable only, as he puts it, for being on the route used by the rich on their way to take the waters in the Caucasus, and for the mountains of coal, visible wherever you looked, from the mines nearby. His father was a mine manager, the family occupying a large house close to the barracks in which the coal workers were housed. Miners came to work there from all parts of Russia, and the variety of their singing impressed Reizen from an early age. There was music at home as well: both his father and his mother loved to sing to their own accompaniment on guitar, harmonica, or other folk instrument; there was 'of course' – as Reizen says in his autobiography – no piano. He tells how on one occasion friends visiting the family brought with them a curious box with a horn protruding from

it, from which emerged strange sounds. Both the singing and the instruments were unlike anything the six-year-old Reizen had heard before. He sat entranced, and even peered into the horn to see if there was someone inside. Much later he recognised that what he had heard had been the duets between Violetta and Alfredo from *La Traviata*.

Not long afterwards it was decided that Mark should go to school at the nearby town of Bakhmut (now Artemovsk). There his horizons widened and, through a chance attendance at a 'vaudeville', he developed a taste for the theatre, a taste that became an obsession when the family, after a short stay in Debaltzevo, settled on a more permanent basis in Lugansk, a larger town where Mark had already entered the 'gymnasium' (secondary school). Ever increasingly stagestruck, he offered his services as an extra to the local theatre company, was accepted without much trouble, and made his debut in a walking-on part as a bodyguard in *Othello*. Although only sixteen, he had already reached the great height that later made him such an imposing figure on the operatic stage, and he comments with satisfaction on his appropriateness for the part. While still at school he also joined the choir, and the strength and purity of his voice, still a treble, astonished his teachers. By the age of sixteen he had developed a magnificent voice, sonorous and produced without effort.

It was customary at the time for leading singers to make guest appearances at provincial theatres, and Reizen was particularly impressed by the baritone Oscar Kamionsky. He also fell under the spell of Anastasia Vialtzeva, the fabulously beautiful salon singer, whose early death from leukaemia in 1913 stunned the entire nation.

Reizen's youthful career in the theatre was cut short by the need to study for the examinations that would qualify him for entry into higher education. These were safely accomplished in the spring of 1914, but within a few months family plans, in common with the entire world situation, were disrupted by the outbreak of War. Reizen's elder brother Isay was called up at once, and a year later Mark followed him. Reizen saw active service on several fronts and was wounded more than once, the last time, in June 1917, severely enough to procure him a discharge. Meanwhile, however, Reizen's musical activities were expanding. Soldiers on the move tend to sing and Reizen's vocal gifts attracted the attention of a Lieutenant Yemelianov, with whom he struck up a friendship and a musical partnership. At his friend's suggestion, Reizen began to sing regularly as soloist with the regimental wind band; later they collaborated in setting up a national instruments orchestra. The venture was a success, and may be said to have marked the true beginning of his singing career. Already, he says, his repertoire was large, including many of the songs, such as *Night*, *Luchinushka*, *Steppe beyond steppe all around*, *The Nightingale* and many others for which he later became famous.

On leaving military service Reizen studied at the Conservatory in Kharkov with Bugamell (1917-19) and then made his debut at the Kharkov Opera as Pimen in "Boris Godunov" in 1921. At first in that season and in the one which followed Reizen sang Zlatogov in Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades*, the King (and Ramphis, too!) in Verdi's *Aida*, Tsuniga in Bizet's *Carmen*, Prince Gremin in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, both bass parts

in Rubinstein's *Demon*, Abimelek in Saint-Saens' *Samson and Delilah*, Orlik in Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa* (later Kochubey in the same opera), Angelotti in Puccini's *Tosca*, Nikalante in Delibes' *Lakmé*, Biterolf in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* and St. Bris in Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* before landing the first major part with which he would be associated – Mephistopheles in Gounod's *Faust*.

Russian critics of the time praised this Mephisto effusively and contemporary photographs clearly show that Reizen cut a remarkable figure in the role (he was always a resourceful actor and master of make up) while his records of *Le veau d'or*; *il était temps* and *Mephistopheles' Serenade* reveal him as a most suave devil not unlike Nicolai Ghiaurov's protagonist today. Also in that 1923-4 season Reizen sang Sobakim in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Tsar's Bride* and then he essayed Ruslan in Glinka's opera, *Ruslan and Ludmilla*. It appears he was a very successful Ruslan (R. Zacharov waxes lyrically about it in Reizen's autobiography) before playing the part of Farlaf (later at Leningrad), a role in which he excelled. It was in this season, too, that Reizen first sang one of his two greatest roles – Dosifey in Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*. He portrayed the militant fanatic Dosifey for over thirty years. Indeed, I have seen a photograph of him in the part as late as 1958 when Reizen was sixty-three years of age! He followed this auspicious debut with two more roles which he was to make very much his own, the Miller in Dargomizhsky's *Rusalka* and Don Basilio in Rossini's *Barber of Seville*. He was outstanding as the Miller and his interpretation of the pitifully greedy Don Basilio was a glory of the Russian stage. He used to portray the part with an old clay pipe between his lips. In this final season at Kharkov Reizen sang the parts of Voevoda and Taras Bulba in Lisenko's opera of the same name.

Now we come to the second stage of Reizen's career, at the Leningrad Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre (now called the S. M. Kirov) 1925-30. There Reizen 'created' the role of the worker Molotov in Gladkovsky and Prussak's *For Red Petrograd*. He also 'created' the role of Stenka Razin in Bershadsky's opera. He went on to sing Ivan the Terrible in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Maid of Pskov*, his first Prince Galitsky, the above-mentioned Farlaf, his celebrated Khan Konchak in Borodin's *Prince Igor*, Holofernes in Serov's *Judith* and Burunday in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Tale of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia*, before in 1928 his first Boris Godunov in Mussorgsky's masterpiece.

This was to be the most enduring role of his for the next quarter of a century. His was one of the three most famous Boris' of the century along with those of Chaliapin and Boris Christoff. He was apparently a 'singing' Boris – not for him any of Chaliapin's melodramatics. He relied on investing every syllable of the part with his own inimitable polished tonal beauty. More restrained than Chaliapin, or Christoff in our own day, but I am assured that Reizen's was every bit as moving as theirs – and much more beautiful to boot! After Boris, Reizen sang Boito's *Mephistopheles* at Monte Carlo (1930) before embarking on his dazzling career at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, in the same year.

He was to become one of the most prominent singers at the Bolshoi appearing with Obukhova, Lemeshev and Kozlovsky, and other great

performers for some twenty-four years. On reaching there he added the Viking Guest in *Sadko* (1934), Salieri in *Mozart and Salieri* (1937) and finally his great Susanin (1939) to his repertory. What a pity it was that he never had the chance to appear on the stage as King Philip or Sarastro — his voice (as a record of Philip's great scene and aria shows) would have been ideal.

Reizen also made some very successful forays abroad. He made guest appearances at the Paris Opéra, at the State Operas in Dresden and Berlin and at the Budapest National Opera where he was especially revered. He was, moreover, a very accomplished concert singer (like his great contemporary Boris Gmyria) especially in Russia, and he also appeared there in films and on the radio.

In Russia he was renowned. He was awarded the Stalin Prize, the Order of Lenin and was named a "People's Artist of the U.S.S.R." as early as 1937. In short he was fully recognised as one of the great vocal figures of his time.

MARK REIZEN'S RICH RECORDED LEGACY

Now an extraordinary feature of Reizen's 78 r.p.m. recordings is that only four operatic titles occur in the first fifty (he made 92 titles) and all four were repeated, one of them *The Song of the Viking Guest* (*Sadko*) on four occasions. Extraordinary, because fine as his songs are, his operatic items are, I think, better still.

The very first series of four records were recorded in 1933 with piano accompaniment by A. Makorov who was to accompany him on and off for the next quarter of a century. Two of these are I believe of particular interest, viz. *The Pilgrim's song* (Tchaikovsky's "I Bless You Forests" Op. 47, No. 5) and the above-mentioned *Sadko* aria. The former is a model, sustained in a moderate slow tempo with dramatic sections and gloriously sung, (the 1938 version is equally well sung) while in the latter — a favourite war-horse of the great Russian bass — the rugged terrain, rough seas and the ferocity of the warrior are delineated in masterly fashion. (I prefer the final version, incidentally, from the complete opera recorded in 1952 because of the really distinctive quality of his low register.)

Many of the songs will be familiar to devotees of Chaliapin and much the same could be said of so many. The older singer displays greater verve and dramatic flair than Reizen who is equally moving by the dignified delivery of sumptuous bass tone but one record I think which catches the very essence of Reizen is his "*Song of the Volga Boatmen*" recorded with an instrumental ensemble in 1940. Chaliapin's famous version is I think equalled and, in one way at least, the production of the tone, surpassed. Just listen to the glorious ending when Reizen softens the tone like the master he undoubtedly was. The folk song, "*Farewell, joy*" was a particular favourite (he recorded it thrice on 78s and all are uniformly good) and his 'O could I but express in song my sorrow (Malashkin) rivals Chaliapin's famous English version as a piece of singing and is considerably more beautiful. The same could be said of Rubinstein's *Persian Love Song*

though the ending by Chaliapin is irresistible. Like his compatriot, Sibirakov, he sings Schubert's *Aufenthalt* (so beloved of basses) with predictable success but I feel he unfortunately fails in *Plaisir d'Amour* and Grieg's *Cradle Song* which do not quite come off. As a singer of Tchaikovsky's songs I find him an ideal interpreter. All are uniformly successful but in addition to the *Pilgrim's* song mentioned earlier I would single out the famous "None but the lonely heart" (especially winning) and "Disenchantment" (*Déception*) which grows on this listener with every hearing. Glinka's "Doubt", too, recalls Chaliapin and Boris Gmyria, another truly great Russian bass, and is beautifully sung, as is the little-known Sakhnovsky song "What honour is there?" This latter song is a lively rousing example of *Reizen*.

But it is the opera records most music lovers will want to know about and *Reizen* does not disappoint. Pride of place must surely go to the Miller's aria from Dargomizhsky's opera, *Rusalka*. The lovely genial tone, rich ripe characterisation, authoritative phrasing and firm bass tone leave the listener with an irresistible sound running through his head. It never fails to delight my friends, most of whom prefer it to Chaliapin's equally unforgettable version. Then there is Khan Konchak's air from Borodin's 'Prince Igor'. There is glorious phrasing, a seductive chuckle and it is crowned by the most wonderful low F imaginable. This most exhilarating version is I think the finest on record though I like Chaliapin's version, too. Farlaf's rondo is another tour de force. Taken a shade more slowly than Chaliapin it is equally successful and most fluently enunciated. His articulation of the words is masterly – in this respect Chaliapin's peer – and a real character emerges, rivetting to the listener. You will look in vain for an Italian buffo bass to equal him. If I have inferred *Reizen* might be lacking in dramatic ability nothing can be further from the truth. Try "I am trembling with fear" (with Elena Korneyeva) from *Ruslan* and *Ludmilla* or "What does this mean?" (with Georgy Nelepp) from *Rusalka*. There are several mementos of his *Dosifey* – I like the prayer which begins Act 5 and his Boris is well represented. The Monologue "I have attained the highest power" is especially successful. It is sung rather than declaimed – the high tessitura well managed and a refreshing totally different interpretation to Chaliapin's great version, Christoff's, too. (No Chaliapin imitator, indeed!) The Farewell and Death of Boris is extremely moving and poignant. His attractive rich sympathetic tones immediately arrest the attention, too, in Pimen's Monologue but he is not so fine dramatically as Chaliapin in that scene. Varlaam's song is also good but perhaps he does not capture the image of the drunkard as vividly as some, notably Chaliapin and to a lesser degree, Christoff. They are I think more spontaneous in execution. Basilio was his only real Italian role and his "La calunnia" in the complete set is most fluently enunciated whilst the Faust arias – though 'Russified' make a fine memento of perhaps his greatest early success. I am quite captivated by his serenade. And if noble phrasing and grave beauty of tone is required it is there in abundance in Aleko's cavatina. Prince Gremin's air from Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* (the 78 not the version in the complete set) is also wonderfully voiced.

"All men surrender to love's power" he sings and I just surrendered to Reizen's glorious tone. You will seek in vain for a better rendering of this famous aria, notwithstanding the great versions by Sibirjakov, Kipnis, Kastorsky and Ghiaurov. Not surprisingly Reizen yields to Chaliapin in the Demon's arioso. He sings beautifully but is much less vivid than his predecessor but he redeems himself as it were in King Philip's great scene. It was a favourite concert piece of his (he never sang the part on the stage) and it is gloriously sung in the style of Pasero or Ghiaurov though he makes a greater total impression than either. Another concert favourite was "O tu Palermo", Procida's great aria in Verdi's 'I Vespri Siciliani', and I often amuse myself playing Reizen's record and Pinza's. The great Italian basso has the edge but I just love the way Reizen's noble bass rolls.

If my praise for Reizen seems effusive I suppose I should redress the balance a little by commenting on what I consider to be a comparative failure viz. Wotan's Abschied und Feuerzauber from Wagner's *Die Walküre*. Here I feel the great Russian is rather out of his element. In spite of his rich sympathetic tones he cannot quite bridge the idiomatic gap so to speak. It is probably the only disappointment one will find in all his operatic records and of how many singers can one say that?

And now a few words about the voice itself. The amazing thing is that it lasted so long. One of his great records issued on a Parlophone LP in 1959 is the Aleko cavatina recorded four years earlier when he was sixty(!) and an LP of Tchaikovsky songs recorded when he was 79 is amazing, so much so that an eminent critic who owns the disc did not realise it until I pointed it out to him. His last recording was a 2-disc set of songs recorded at the ripe old age of 85 and even then, though the voice had aged, the interpretations were well worth hearing.

The voice had a range of over two octaves and the real glory of it is in that lower register. Sample it in that final recording of "The Song of the Viking Guest" to hear what I mean. It was rich, warm, powerful but perhaps N. Tanayev who heard him many times describes Reizen's noble bass best:—

"Unique is Reizen's natural gift. His bass of a noble timbre filled with emotion sounds even and soft in any register. Reizen's voice is capable of all shades of expression, from powerful thundering forte to heartfelt ethereal piano." (I am reminded again of his wonderful Volga boatsong).

Indeed, one of the Soviet critics of the time wrote that Reizen's velvety bass was a unique phenomenon evoking the delight of all those who were lucky enough to have heard it. And after a session playing over many of the records mentioned earlier I must say I feel bound to agree with that! With most basses their tone begins to spread as they approach fifty but Reizen's seems to become even more thrilling especially in that lower register (that F in Konchak's air at the age of 56).

Before leaving this discussion of Reizen's recorded voice and art I would like to refer to John Steane's recent call in the Gramophone for a new recording of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Mozart and Salieri* featuring Nesterenko and an 'acceptable' tenor. But there really is no need. Reizen's version is the 'definitive' one and Kozlovsky is his idiosyncratic and highly

attractive self in the role of Mozart. Reizen's interpretation is masterly and his singing a joy to the ear, captured for posterity on a well pressed mono Melodiya LP recorded in 1951. (Discocorp U.S.A. have also reissued it recently, again attractively transferred). Added to this, there is no Russian tenor singing today who remotely compares with Kozlovsky, even then when he was at the end of a distinguished career (aged 51 at the time of the recording).

All Russian titles have been translated into English, German, French and Italian for ease of recognition into the original languages. But all are sung in Russian except the two Italian arias "O tu Palermo" from *Vespri Siciliani*, King Philip's aria from *Don Carlos* and probably Fiesco's Romance from *Simon Boccanegra* – a copy of this is not immediately available for re-checking.

MARK REIZEN/MARC RAISIN

Since the preparation of Norman Linnell's article for press, we have received the following additional information from Richard Bebb.

MARC RAISIN (Bass with piano – Albert Coates) Commercial Test

SALVATOR ROSA – Pt I	BB 18450-I
Pt II	BB 18451-I and take II

PRINCE IGOR – Galitsky's Aria	CC 18452-I
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SADKO – Aria	CC 18453-I
I bless you forest	CC 18454-I

These were all recorded on 4th December, 1929, according to the Hayes recording book. The *Salvator Rosa* Pt. II is the Gomes *Di sposa, di padre* aria, and the first side is presumably the recitative, since the aria itself is complete. *I bless you forest* is probably the Tchaikovsky one, also known as *Pilgrim's song*.

Mr. Bebb adds that this is also the only extant example of Coates playing the piano.

This raises some interesting questions. What about his recording career between 4th December, 1929 and 1933, the first date in our discography? Was there anything before December 1929? Or could there have been two Russian basses with similar names? If anyone can throw any light on it, please write.

DISCOGRAPHY, Part 1, 78s

- | | | | |
|-----|-------|---|---------|
| 1. | 02584 | I bless you forests (Pilgrim's song) Op. 47, No. 5
(Tchaikowsky) [A. Tolstoy] pf. A. Makarov, 1933 | |
| 2. | 02586 | SADKO: Song of the Viking Guest
(Rimsky-Korsakov) | do |
| 3. | 2815 | Farewell Joy, Russian folk song | do |
| 4. | 2822 | They don't let Masha go over the brook
Russian folk song | do |
| 5. | 4581 | Why are the voices silent? (Bacchic song)
Glazunov) [A Pushkin] | do 1936 |
| 6. | 4582 | For the shores of a distant homeland
(Borodin) [Pushkin] | do |
| 7. | 05882 | Fatherland song (Dunayevsky) Chor. & Orch. Bolshoi
[Lebedev-Kumach] Theatre, c Dunayevsky | |
| 8. | 5883 | As above, but a 25cm variant
Also on English Decca F 7991 & Topic TRC 1A &
TRC 13. | do |
| 9. | 5945 | Farewell Joy, Russian folk song Aleksev. orch. | 1937 |
| 10. | 07518 | I bless you forests (Pilgrim's song) Op. 47, No. 5
(Tchaikowsky) [A. Tolstoy] pf. A. Makarov, 1938 | |
| 11. | 07519 | Night (Tchaikowsky) Op. 60, No. 9
[Polonsky] | do |
| 12. | 07520 | Aufenthalt (Schubert) D 957(5)
[Rellstab] | do |
| 13. | 05721 | Der Doppelgänger (Schubert)
[Heine] | do |
| 14. | 9151 | The Night Wind (Dargomizhsky)
[Pushkin] | do |
| 15. | 9152 | O could I but express in song my sorrow
(Malashkin) [Lishin] | do |
| 16. | 9153 | Gold rolls here below – Persian love song
(Rubinstein) Op. 34, No. 9 [Mirza-Schaffy] | do |
| 17. | 9154 | I am sad (Dargomizhsky)
[Lermontov] | do |
| 18. | 9155 | Ich grolle nicht (Schumann) Op. 45, No. 7
[Heine] | do |
| 19. | 9599 | Sappische Ode (Brahms) Op. 94, No. 4
[Schmidt – trs. Kolomintsey] | do |
| 20. | 9600 | Come, fill, fill – Scottish drinking song
(Beethoven) Op. 108, No. 13 [Smyth, trs. Globi] | do |
| 21. | 9601 | Frenzied Nights (Tchaikowsky) Op. 6, No. 6
[Apukhtin] | do |
| 22. | 9602 | The Nightingale (Tchaikowsky) Op. 60, No. 4
[Pushkin] | do |
| 23. | 9664 | The Titular Councillor (Dargomizhsky)
[Weinberg] and
The Miller (Dargomizhsky) [Pushkin] | do |

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|-----|--------|--|--|
| 24. | 9665 | Elegy (Yakolev) [Delvig] | A Makarov, pf. 1939
vla. V. Boriskovsky |
| 25. | 9666 | Autumn Night (Glinka; Rimsky-Korsakov) | do |
| 26. | 9915 | FAUST: Mephistopheles' Serenade (Gounod) | Orch. Bolshoi Theatre,
C.L. Steinberg, 1939 |
| 27. | 9916 | FAUST: Le veau d'or (Gounod) | as above w/chor. |
| 28. | 9918 | FAUST: Il etait temps (Gounod) | do |
| 29. | 10613 | Farewell, Joy. Russian folk song | inst. ensemble, 1940 |
| 30. | 10614 | They don't let Masha go over the brook | |
| | | Russian folk song | do |
| 31. | 10615 | Night - Russian folk song | do |
| 32. | 10616 | Song of the Volga Boatmen - | |
| | | Russian folk song | do |
| 33. | 407A | Doubt (Glinka) [Kukolnik] | pf. S. Davidov 1941 |
| 34. | 407B | Autumn Night (Glinka; Rimsky-Korsakov) | do |
| 35. | 14047 | The Tempest Rages (Sokolov) | |
| | | [Nikitin] | inst. ensemble, 1946 |
| 36. | 14267 | So slowly pass my days (Rimsky-Korsakov) | |
| | | [Pushkin] Op. 51, No. 1 | A. Makarov pf. 1946 |
| 37. | 14268 | O, if you could for a moment (Rimsky-Korsakov) | |
| | | Op. 39, No. 1 [Tolstoy] | do |
| 38. | 14629 | Octave (Rimsky-Korsakov) Op. 45, No. 3 | |
| | | [Maikov] | do |
| 39. | 14349 | We parted proudly (Dargomizhsky) | |
| | | [Kurochkin] | pf. S. Stuchevsky, 1947 |
| 40. | 14910 | Song of the Flea (Moussorgsky) | |
| | | [Goethe] | A. Makarov pf. 1947 |
| 41. | 15362 | O thou Volga - Russian folk song | inst. ensemble, 1947 |
| 42. | 15363 | In the Zhiguli Hills, Russian folk song | |
| | | [Triodin] | do |
| 43. | 15399 | Song of the Flea (Beethoven) Op. 75, No. 3 | |
| | | "Es war einmal" | A. Makarov, pf. 1947 |
| 44. | 015409 | RUSLAN & LUDMILLA: Ruslan's Aria | |
| | 015410 | Field, o field | Orch. Bolshoi Theatre |
| | 016313 | three sides | C.A. Melik-Pashaev, 1947 |
| 45. | 15432 | An die Musik (Schubert) D 547 | |
| | | [Schobart] | A. Makarov, pf. 1947 |
| 46. | 15433 | A Song of Travel (Glinka) | |
| | | [Kukolnik] | do |
| 47. | 15595 | Song of Shchors (Blanter) | Chor. & Orch. |
| | | [Isakovsky] | Moscow Radio |
| 48. | 15596 | Partisan Girl (Blanter) | |
| | | [Isakovsky] | c. v. Khusevsky |
| 49. | 15638 | A Young Eagle flew over the Volga | |
| | | Russian folk song | inst. ensemble 1948 |
| 50. | 15684 | SADKO: Song of the Viking Guest | |
| | | (Rimsky-Korsakov) | Orch. Bolshoi Theatre
Melik-Pashaev, 1948 |

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|-----|---------|--|--|
| 51. | 15685 | RUSLAN & LUDMILLA: Farlaf's Rondo
(Glinka) | do |
| 52. | 16052 | On a high burial mound,
Russ. folk song | Inst. ensemble 1948 |
| 53. | 16053 | Arise red sun (Slonov) | do |
| 54. | 16260 | Two Giants (Stolypin)
[Lermontov] | A Makarov. pf. 1948 |
| 55. | 16261 | When the King went to war (Koenemann)
[Koltonovskiy] | do |
| 56. | 16266 | EUGENE ONEGIN: Gremin's Aria: Everyone knows
love on earth (Tchaikowsky) | Orch. Bolshoi Theatre |
| | 16267 | two sides | A. Melik-Pashaev 1948 |
| 57. | 16312 | JUDITH: Holofernes' war cry (Serov) | do |
| 58. | 16439 | KHOVANSCHINA: Scene of Dosifey in Act 5
(Moussorgsky) | Chor. & Orch. Lenin-
grad (Kirov) Theatre |
| | 16440 | two sides | B. Khaikin, 1948 |
| 59. | 16443 | KHOVANSCHINA: Final scene with
S. Preobrazhenskaya & I. Nechayev | do |
| 60. | 017451 | PRINCE IGOR: Konchak's aria (Borodin) | Orch. Bolshoi, |
| | 017452 | two sides | V. Nebolsin, 1949 |
| 61. | 17453 | The Prophet (Rimsky-Korsakov) Op. 49, No. 2 | do |
| | 17454 | two sides | do |
| 62. | 017644- | BORIS GODUNOV: Scene in chamber room with
E. Shumskaya & N. Khanaev | Chor. & Orch. Bolshoi |
| | 017651 | (Moussorgsky) rec. 1948 | N. Golovanov, 1958 |
| | | | re-issue |
| 63. | 017699 | RUSALKA: Miller's aria
(Dargomizhsky) | Bolshoi Orch. |
| | | | V. Nebolsin, 1950 |
| 64. | 017774 | The Sailor's Last Voyage
(Alnaes) [Wergeland] | A. Makarov. pf. 1950 |
| 65. | 017775 | Aufenthalt (Schubert) D.957(5)
[Rellstab] | do |
| 66. | 017799 | RUSALKA: What does this mean? Mad scene and death
of the Miller (Dargomizhsky) | Chor. & Orch. Bolshoi |
| | 017800 | two sides | Th. V. Nebolsin, 1950 |
| 67. | 018041- | IVAN SUSANIN: (Life for the Tsar)
Act IV, scene 2, complete on 6 sides | do |
| 68. | 18452- | BORIS GODUNOV: Coronation scene, with N. Khanaev
(Moussorgsky) four sides. | Orch. Bolshoi Th. |
| | 18455 | rec. 1948 | N. Golovanov
(re) issued 1950 |
| 69. | 18550- | BORIS GODUNOV: Death of Boris, with
B. Zlatogorova) two sides | as above, plus soloists
& chor. |
| 70. | 18583 | I do not please you (Tchaikowsky) Op. 63, No. 3 (words
by the Grand Duke Constantine) A. Makarov, pf 1950 | |

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71. 18584 None but the lonely heart (Tchaikowsky) Op. 6,
No. 6 [Goethe, Mey] do
72. 018671 Come, fill, fill, Scottish drinking song (Beethoven) Op.
108, No. 13 [Smyth, trs. Globi] N. Blanter, pf. 1950
73. 018672 Song of the dark forest (Borodin –
also author) do
74. 018917- DON CARLOS: Ella giammai m'amo – Dormiro sol –
018918 King Philip's aria (Verdi) Moscow Radio Symph
Orch. S. Samosud 1951
75. 19973 IVAN SUSANIN: (Life for the Tsar) Trio, The joyful
19974 reunion, with E. Shumskaya & G. Nelepp)
two sides Bolshoi Theatre Orch.
V. Nebolsin 1951
76. 020053 IVAN SUSANIN: Duet with Sokolova (Glinka)
020054 two sides rec. 1950 do
77. 20477 On the old burial mound (Kalinnikov)
[Nikitin] A. Makarov, pf. 1951
78. 20478 It is not the wind from the height (Tanayev), Op. 17,
No. 5 [Tolstoy] do
79. 20568 Das Wandern – (Die schöne Müllerin) (Schubert)
D 795 (1), [Müller] N. Blanter pf. 1951
80. 20569 What honour is there? (Sakhnovsky)
[Tolstoy] do
81. 21205 EUGENE ONEGIN: Scene in Act III, with E. Kruglikova
& Andrei Ivanov (Tchaikowsky) Orch. Bolshoi Theatre
A. Orlov, 1952
82. 21215 The Old Corporal (Dargomizhsky)
21216 [Kurochkin] two sides A. Makarov, pf. 1952
83. 21565 Do not depart (Rachmaninov) Op. 4, No. 1
[Merezhkovsky] do
84. 21566 In bright day or surly night (Sakhnovsky)
[Svobodin] do
85. 24239 The Sonnets of Shakespeare (Kabalevsky) Op. 52, No. 8
[Shakespeare, trs. Marshak] D. Kabalevsky, pf 1954
86. 24240 As above, No. 102 do
87. 25607 ALEKO: Aleko's Cavatina (Rachmaninov)
25608 two sides Orch. Bolshoi Theatre
V. Nebolsin, 1956
88. 27802- SIMON BOCCANEGRA: Il lacerato spirito, Recitative
27083 & Aria of Fiesco in the Prologue Orch. Bolshoi Theatre
(Verdi), Rec. 1953, two sides V. Nebolsin, issued 1956
89. 0032346 Song of the flea (Beethoven)
Op. 75, No. 3 A. Makarov, pf. 1959
90. 0032347 Das Wandern – Die schöne Müllerin
(Schubert) D 795 (1) do
91. 38483- PRINCE IGOR: Khan Konchak's Aria (Borodin),
38484 two sides, rec. 1951 Orch. Bolshoi Theatre
A. Melik Paschaev 1962

NB (1) Mark Reizen appeared in one complete opera on 78s – PRINCE IGOR (Borodin) in which he sang the part of Khan Konchak.

020673 Prince Igor – A. Ivanov

020714 Jaroslavna – E. Smolenskaya

-4235- Vladimir – S. Lemeshev

020673 Galitsky – A. Pirogov

020714

with chorus & orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre conducted by A. Melik-Pashaev. Recorded in 1951.

(2) Mark Reizen's 78 scenes from BORIS GODUNOV were incorporated in the microgroove issue of Boris Godunov, replacing Pirogov's scenes.

MELODIYA NUMBERING SYSTEMS AND INDICATION OF SIZES

As far as 78 r.p.m. discs are concerned, the system was very simple. Starting apparently near zero each master was numbered consecutively. Very similar to that used by Victor who then prefixed the matrix by B to indicate 10 inch and C for 12 inch.

The Russians simplified on this by using the matrix number also as the issue number and to distinguish 30cm (12 inch) prefixed the number by a nought on the labels and in catalogues. So all discs are 25cm (10 inch) except those preceded by the additional 0, making 30cm disc numbers one digit longer. Different to any other company though, this means that each side of a disc has a different number, usually adjacent, but couplings have at times varied.

Other markings are found etched in the disc surround. These are not matrix numbers. Apparently the letters are the initials of the committee that passed the disc for publication and its pass number. These reverted to zero annually and so are of little use to discographers.

There is one disc in this discography outside the above system. Nos. 33-34 with sides 407A & B. This would be an issue on one of the cheaper labels made from time to time, in this case probably SOVSONG.

THE CHANGE FROM SHELLAC TO VINYL AND MICROGROOVE

Here Melodiya loses its simplicity.

Records prefixed D-00, e.g. 00219-20 are 20cm (8 inch) 78 r.p.m. Some are labelled "variable microgroove" and can be shellac or vinyl.

Records prefixed D-000, e.g. 0007029-30 are 17.5cm (7 inch) but whether played at 33 or 45 r.p.m. can only be deduced from the record label.

All others are 25cm (10 inch) long play except those with a six digit number, the extra number being obtained by preceding with a nought, exactly as with the 78s, e.g. D-023227-8, which is 30cm (12 inch).

M – Mono, as in M10-42505-6

CM – stereo/mono compatible as in CM-04069-78

C – stereo, as in C10-05797-98

The 10 in these numbers has no connection with size.

Part 2, MICROGROOVE RECORDS

92. D-00219-20 Russian folk songs: Oh, thou Volga/A young eagle flew over the Volga.
93. D-00249-50 BORIS GODUNOV: Farewell & Death of Boris, with B. Zlatogorova (Moussorgsky)
94. D-00251-52 EUGEN ONEGIN: Gremin's Aria (Tchaikowsky)
PRINCE IGOR: Konchak's aria (Borodin)
95. D-00616-17 A tear trembles (Tchaikowsky) Op. 6, No. 4, (Tolstoy)/Autumn, Op. 54, No. 14 [Plescheev]
96. D-00618-19 Dusk fell on the earth, Op. 47, No. 3, [Mickiewicz, tr. Berg]/I do not please you, Op. 63, No. 3 [Grand Duke Constantine]/Silence descends on the golden cornfields, Op. 57, No. 2 [Tolstoy] (All Tchaikowsky)
97. D-00620-21 Doubt (Glinka) — [Kukolnik]/Persian love song (Rubinstein) — Gold rolls here below [Mirza-Schaffy] Op. 34, No. 9
98. D-00713-14 Anchar, Op. 49, No. 1 The Upas-tree/The gloomy day has faded, Op. 51, No. 5 (Rimsky-Korsakov) [both Pushkin]
99. D-00865-66 On the old burial mound (Kalinnikov) [Nikitin]/Song of the dark forest (Borodin)/The midnight review (Glinka) [Zhukovsky]
100. D-00885-86 RUSLAN & LUDMILLA: Ah, what grief (Glinka), with E. Korneyeva.
101. D-00951-52 Der Wanderer, Op. 4, No. 1 [Schmidt]/An die Musik, Op. 88, No. 4 [Schöber]/Das Wandern (Die schöne Müllerin), (all Schubert).
102. D-959-60 BORIS GODUNOV: Act 1, scene 2 (in the inn) with G. Nelepp, V. Shevstov, E. Verbitskaya & S. Krasovsky. (Moussorgsky). Bolshoi Th. Orch. V. Nebolsin. 1952
103. D-001274-75 DON CARLOS: Recit. & Aria — Ella giammai m'amo/Dormiro sol. (Verdi) 1953
104. D-1316-17 DIE WALKÜRE: Wotan's Abschied & Feuerzauber (Wagner)/SIMON BOCCANEGRA: Fiesco's romance — Il lacerato spirito/VESPRI SICILIANI: Procida's Aria — O tu Palermo (Verdi).
105. D-1346-47 Reconciliation Op. 25, No. 1 (Tchaikowsky) [Shcherbina]/So slowly pass my days, Op. 51, No. 1 (Rimsky-Korsakov) [Pushkin]/Why are the voices silent? Bacchic song (Glazunov) [Pushkin]
106. D-01368-69 PRINCE IGOR: Scene at Galitsky's house (Borodin) with I. Skobtsov & F. Godovkin/BORIS GODUNOV: Act 1, Scene 1, with G. Nelepp (Moussorgsky). Orch. Bolshoi Th. V. Nebolsin 1953
107. D-10402-03 EUGENE ONEGIN: excerpts (Tchaikowsky) from set — Gremin's aria. 1953

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123. PMA 1056 ALEKO: The camp sleeps & In the mist of memory (Rachmaninov) Orch. Bolshoi Theatre, V. Nebolsin: RUSLAN & LUDMILLA: I am trembling with fear with Korneyeva & O Joy. Cond. A. Melik-Pashaev (Glinka): RUSALKA: Now look here & What does this mean? with G. Nelepp & chorus (Dargomizhsky). Cond. V. Nebolsin. 1959 issue
124. 45D-0006057-58 ALEKO: Song of the old gypsy & Aleko's Cavatina (Rachmaninov) 1960
125. 45D-0007029-30 PRINCE IGOR: Konchak's aris (Borodin); SADKO: Song of the Viking Guest (Rimsky-Korsakov); BORIS GODUNOV: Varlaam's song (Moussorgsky)
126. 00014083-84 As above
127. D-08109-10 IVAN SUSANIN: Act III trio, with E. Shumskaya & I. Sokolova; Quartet with Shumskaya, Sokolova & G. Nelepp; Susanin's Aria (Glinka)
128. D-8483-84 SIMON BOCCANEGRA: Fiesco's Romance - Il lacerato spirito; VESPRI SICILIANI: Procida's Aria - O tu Palermo (Verdi); BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA: Don Basilio's aria - La Calunnia (Rossini); DON CARLOS: King Philip's aria - Ella giammai m'amo . . . Dormiro sol. (Verdi)
129. D-8643-44 RUSLAN & LUDMILLA: Excerpts - Farlaf's rondo. (Glinka) 1961
130. D-8871-72 BACCHIC SONG (Glazunov); For the shores of a distant homeland (Borodin) (From a disc of miscellaneous songs by Russian composers.)
131. D-9115-16 SADKO: Song of the Viking Guest (in excerpts from set) (Rimsky-Korsakov).
132. D-9121-22 BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA: Scene Don Basilio & Dr. Bartolo, with V. Malishev: Don Basilio's aria - La Calunnia (from set) (Rossini).
133. D-10435-36 On the old burial mound (Kalinnikov); Bacchic song (Glazounov), For the shores of a distant homeland & Song of the dark forest (Borodin); The leaves rustled sadly, Trepak, The Seminarist & Song of the flea (Moussorgsky)
134. D-14305-06 The two giants (Stolypin); from a two disc set devoted to songs set to poems by Lermontov.
135. D-013345-46 RUSALKA: Scene & duet (Prince & Miller) What does this mean? with G. Nelepp.
136. D-016337-38 Tchaikowsky Romances - Dusk fell on the earth, None but the lonely heart, At the ball, I do not please you, Reconciliation, Night (The first candle-light fades) Op. 73, No. 2, The fearful minute, the lights in the rooms were extinguished, Autumn, The Nightingale. 1965

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108. D-1410-11 PRINCE IGOR: excerpts, from set, Konchak's aria (Borodin)
109. D-1526-27 IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA: excerpts from set, Don Basilio's aria La Calunnia.
110. D-2008-09 Silence descends on the golden cornfields [Tolstoy]/ Don Juan's serenade. In collection of Tchaikovsky songs by various singers. 1954
111. D-2016-17 Mokroysov — Sacred stone [Zharova], Moscow Radio ensemble, B. Aleksandrov.
112. D-02084-85 SADKO: Excerpts (Rimsky-Korsakov) from set — Song of the Viking Guest 1954
113. D-2597 to 3124 Roads (Novikov) [Oshanin] From collection of Novikov songs. 1955
114. D-2462-63 Seven Shakespearian Sonnets from Op. 52, Nos. 81, 27, 102, 30, 153, 13 & 8. Pf. D. Kabalevsky at pf. (composer) 1955
115. D-02940-41 BORIS GODUNOV: Boris' Monologue in prologue, Boris' Monologue Act II, Death of Boris with B. Zlatogorova (Moussorgsky) 1956
- IVAN SUSANIN: Susanin's aria (Glinka)
116. D-3524-25 ALEKO: The old gypsy's song. Aleko's Cavatina. RUSALKA: Miller's mad scene, with G. Nelepp (coupled solo by G. Nelepp) (Dargomizhsky). Chor. & Orch. Bolshoi, V. Nebolsin.
117. D-3690-91 Doubt; The Midnight Review; Autumn Night; A song of travel (Glinka)/The Old Corporal; I remember how deeply; The Night Wind; The Worm; The Titular Councillor; The Miller (Dargomizhsky)
118. D-3730-31 Song of Shchors & Partisan Girl. From a collection of songs by Blanter.
119. D-4242-43 Why so early, grass? (Varlamov); Elegy (Yakovlev); Bacchic song (Rubinstein); In bright day & surly night (Sakhnovsky); My lips are silent (Bleichmann); O could I but express in song & My Sorrow (Malashkin).
120. D-4754-55 Song of Shchors, Rec. 1948 (Blanter).
121. D-4760-61 Roads (Novikov) [Oshanin] rec. 1955. Both included in 12 disc set "Anthology of Soviet Song" 1958
122. PARLOPHONE (England) issued under the auspices of Melodiya, U.S.S.R. but pressed in England and identical with equivalent Melodiya discs.
- PMA 1047-48 BORIS GODUNOV: Scene in the cell, with G. Nelepp, Scene at the Inn; Boris' Monologue Act II; Scene at Cathedral of St. Basil; Death of Boris (Moussorgsky); PRINCE IGOR: 1. Scene at Galitsky's house; 2. Konchak's Aria. Chor./Orch. of Bolshoi, Cond. by V. Nebolsin, V. Golovanov, A. Melik-Pashaev. 1959 issue.

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137. D-22993-94 ASYA: Song of the old man (Ippolitov-Ivanov) From Turgenev in music including excerpts from Asya.
138. D-023227-28 RUSALKA: Miller's aria (Dargomizhsky), RUSLAN & LUDMILLA: Farlaf's Rondo (Glinka), BORIS GODUNOV: Pimen's monologue, Act I (Moussorgsky), PRINCE IGOR: Konchak's aria (Borodin), Do not speak; Love will pass (Glinka), The stormy day has ended (Rimsky-Korsakov), What honour is there? (Sakhnovsky), All things depart; Do not depart (Rachmaninov), Heroism (Tchaikowsky).
139. D-030753-54 RUSLAN & LUDMILLA: The happy day is gone . . . Ah what grief, with E. Korneyeva, From a pair of discs devoted to the conductor A. Melik-Pashaev.
140. D-032243-44 KHOVANSCHCHINA: Duet Act III, with Maksakova, From a set devoted to Maksakova.
141. D-035105-12 IVAN SUSANIN: Susanin's aria (Glinka) RUSALKA: Miller's aria (Dargomizhsky), SADKO: Song of the Viking Guest (Rimsky-Korsakov), The Prophet, PRINCE IGOR: Konchak's aria (Borodin), ALEKO: Aleko's Cavatina (Rachmaninov), THE DEMON: Aria Act III (Rubinstein), BORIS GODUNOV: Monologue Act I, Boris' Monologue Act II (Moussorgsky), DON CARLOS: Philip's Aria, VESPRI SICILIANI: Procida's Aria (Verdi), BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA: Don Basilio's Aria (Rossini), FAUST: Le veau d'or, Il était temps, Mephistopheles' Serenade (Gounod), DIE WALKÜRE: Wotan's Abschied und Feuerzauber (Wagner), Doubt (Glinka), For the shores of a distant homeland (Borodin), Disenchantment; The fearful minute (Tchaikowsky), It is not the wind blowing from the heights, (Tanayev), Bacchic Song (Glazounov), Plaisir d'amour (Martini), Cradle Song (Grieg), Aufenthalt; An die Musik (Schubert), Ich grolle nicht, Die Beiden Grenadiere (Schumann), Sing Gusli (Telemann), The Tempest rages (Sokolov), Russian folk songs — O, thou Volga, They don't let Masha go over the brook, In the Zhiguli Hills, Song of the Volga boatman, Sacred stone (Mokroysov), Partisan Girl (Blanter), Roads (Novikov), That's not the point my friends (Khrennikov), Song of Shchors (Blanter).
142. D-035263 Four disc set dedicated to Mark Osipovich Reizen. Song of Travel (Glinka) (This No. 6 of a song cycle or set of "Twelve Romances" called "Farewell to Petersburg")

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143. CM-04069-78 Oh! Stay my love, Op. 4, No. 1 (Rachmaninov) (Merezhkovsky). – In stereo LP of Romances and songs of Rachmaninov, Various artists.
144. C10 05797 Tchaikovsky Romances: Heroism, Not a word O my friend, The lights in the room were extinguished, Night (The faint candle light fades [Rathaus], Op. 73, No. 2, At the Ball, Frenzied Nights, The Nightingale, It was in the early Spring, Night (Why do I love you?), I bless you forests (Pilgrim's song). All with V. Khvostin at the piano, Reizen then 79 years old, Rec. 1974.
145. C10 13671-74 At the gates of the holy refuge, In the silent night, Fate (from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony), All things depart, Do not depart (Rachmaninov); Trepak, Field Marshal Death, The Seminarist, The Goat, Song of the Flea (Moussorgsky); Aufenthalt, Der Lindenbaum, Die Krähe, Der Leiermann, Der greise Kopf, Das Wandern, Der Wanderer, An die Musik (Schubert); Wenn ich in deinen Augen Seh', Ich hab' im Traum geweinet, Ich grolle nicht, Hör ich das Liedchen klingen, Die beiden Grenadiere (Schumann). All with V. Khvostin at the piano, celebrating 85th birthday! 1980
146. M10 42505-06 BORIS GODUNOV: Boris' Monologue Act III, (Moussorgsky), THE DEMON: Aria Act III, (Rubinstein), RUSALKA: The Miller's Aria, (Dargomizhsky), SADKO: Song of the Viking Guest (Rimsky-Korsakov), ALEKO: Aleko's Cavatina, VESPRI SICILIANI: Procida's Recitative & Aria, DON CARLOS: King Philip's Aria (Verdi), FAUST: Mephistopheles' Serenade (Gounod), BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA: Don Basilio's Aria (Rossini).

Part 3, COMPLETE OPERAS (in order of issue)

147. D-020673-74 PRINCE IGOR (Borodin) Details under 78s
D-0632-39 L.P. re-issues of the same Bolshoi Chorus &
D-05322-29 78 set. Orch.
Amelik-Pashaev
(Also issued on Period, USA; SPLP 552 (omitting Act III) 1951
CHANTE DU MONDE (France) LDX 8034-6
(complete)
148. D-0253-60 EUGENE ONEGIN (Tchaikowsky)
D-09377-82 Gremin – M. Reizen
Tatiana – E. Kruglikova
Olga – M. Maksakov
Onegin – A. Ivanov
Lensky – I. Kozolvsky

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149. D-0588-89 MOZART & SALIERI (Rimsky-Korsakov)
 Salieri — M. Reizen Moscow Radio Chor.
 Mozart — I. Kozlovsky & Orch. S. Samosud
 (Also issued on Concert Hall Society, USA, G. Goldfarb, pf. 1952
 CHS 1315,
 Colosseum, USA, CLPS 10420
 Discocorp, USA
150. D-01480-87 SADKO: (Rimsky-Korsakov)
 Viking Guest — M. Reizen Bolshoi Chor. &
 Sadko — G. Nelepp Orch.
 Volkhova — E. Shumskaya N. Golovanov,
 Lubava — V. Davidova 1953
 Hindu Guest — I. Kozlovsky
 Venetian Guest — P. Lisitsian
 (Also issued on Monarch MWL 313-6
 Concert Hall Society, CHS 1307
 Chante du Monde, LDX 8100-2
151. D-01550-55 IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA (Rossini)
 Don Basilio — M. Reizen Chorus & Orch.
 Almaviva — I. Kozlovsky Moscow Radio,
 Figaro — I. Burlak S. Samosud
 Rosina — V. Firsova 1953
 Dr. Bartolo — V. Malyshev
152. D-01712-19 KHOVANSCHINA (Moussorgsky)
 Dositheus — M. Reizen Bolshoi Chorus
 Ivan Khovansky — A. Krivchen & Orch.
 Andrew Khovansky — G. Bolishakov V. Nebolsin
 Golitsin — N. Khanayev 1954
 Shaklovity — A. Ivanov
 Martha — M. Maksakova
153. D-02269-76 KHOVANSCHINA (Moussorgsky)
 D-011-89-94 Dositheus — M. Reizen Chor. & Orch.
 Ivan Khovansky — B. Freidkov of Leningrad
 Andrew Khovansky — I. Nechayev 'Kirov' Th.
 Shaklovityov — I. Shaskov B. Khaikin
 Martha — S. Preobrazhenskaya 1954
154. M10-37403-10 BORIS GODUNOV: (Moussorgsky)
 Boris Godunov — M. Reizen Bolshoi Chor.
 Feodor — B. Zlatogorova & Orchestra
 Xenia — E. Kruglikova N. Golovanov
 Shuisky — N. Khanaev 1975
 Pimen — M. Michailov
 Dimitri — G. Nelepp
 Marina — M. Maksakova
 Varlaam — V. Lubentsov (1948 recording)
- N.B. 1. The Boris Godunov recording is a relatively recent (1975) issue, with Reizen's contributions being 78s inserted in place of Alexander Pirogov's scenes. Thus although released as a complete recording it

is a "hybrid" since Reizen's scenes have two conductors, V. Nebolsin and N. Golovanov and this way the "complete" recording is not included in Part I (78s).

2. American re-issues abound of Reizen's records on labels such as Colosseum, Ultraphon, Bruno and others but I have not been able to trace them all and those I have have been primitive and amateurish in the extreme, with one notable exception, Discocorp. Their re-issues of the Nebolsin Khovanschina and the earlier mentioned Samosud Mozart and Salieri are nearly as good as the original Melodiya records. The other American issues are to be avoided.

THE CONCERT REPERTOIRE OF MARK REIZEN

1. Arias

Bellini	Aria from 'La Sonnambula'
Boito	Mefistofele's aria from 'Mefistofele'
Borodin	Konchak's, aria from 'Prince Igor'
	Galitsky's song from 'Prince Igor'
Wagner	Wotan's farewell and fire spell from 'Die Walküre'
Verdi	Procida's aria from 'The Sicilian Vespers'
	Fiesco's aria from 'Simon Boccanegra'
	King Philip's aria from 'Don Carlos'
Handel	Aria from 'Serse'
Glinka	Susanin's aria from 'Ivan Susanin'
	Ruslan's aria from 'Ruslan and Ludmila'
	Farlaf's rondo from 'Ruslan and Ludmila'
Gomez	Aria from 'Salvator Rosa'
Gounod	Mephistopheles' 'Complets' from 'Faust'
	Mephistopheles' Serenade from 'Faust'
Dargomizhsky	Miller's aria from 'Rusalka'
Delibes	Nilakanta's 'Stanas' from 'Lakmé'
Lysenko	Taras' aria from 'Taras Bulba'
Mozart	Leporello's aria from 'Don Giovanni'
Musorgsky	Monologue of Boris from 'Boris Godunov'
Rachmaninov	Aleko's cavatina from 'Aleko'
	Old gypsy's tale from 'Aleko'
Rimsky-Korsakov	Song of the Viking Guest from 'Sadko'
Rossini	Don Basilio's aria from 'The Barber of Seville'
Rubinstein	'On the ocean of the air' from 'The Demon'
	'Do not weep, child' from 'The Demon'
	'I am he whom you called' from 'The Demon'
Serov	Holofernes' aria from 'Judith'
	Yeryomla's song from 'The Power of Evil'
Tchaikovsky	Gremin's aria from 'Eugene Onegin'
	King René's aria from 'Iolanta'
	Kochubey's aria from 'Mazepa'
	Tomsky's song from 'The Queen of Spades'

2. Bass parts from Oratorios and Symphonic Works

Berlioz	'Damnation of Faust'
Beethoven	Ninth Symphony
	Missa Solemnis
Verdi	Requiem
Handel	'Dettingen' Te Deum
Mozart	Requiem

3. Romances (i.e. Art Songs)

Alnaes	The last voyage
Balakirev	Lead me in secret night
	The Desert
	Knight-errant
Beethoven	Drinking song
	In questa tomba oscura
	Song of the flea
Bleichmann	My lips are silent
Borodin	For the shores of a distant homeland
	Song of the dark forest
	The sleeping princess
Glazunov	Bacchic song
Glinka	Do not speak
	Do not torment me
	The Midnight review
	Autumn night
	Song of travel
	Doubt
Grechaninov	At the crossroads
	If you will be my wife
	With a sharp axe
	The withered flower
Grieg	Cradle song
	A swan
	A dream
Dargomizhsky	I am in love, fair maid
	Lonely and sad
	The Miller
	I am sad
	Night breeze
	We parted in pride
	The Old Corporal
	The Titular Counsellor
	The Worm
	I remember how deeply (Elegy)
Kalinnikov	On the old burial mound
Koeneman	When the King went to war
Malashkin	O could I but express in song my sorrow

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Mussorgsky	A Vision Forgotten The goat The leaves rustled sadly Song of the flea Field-marshal Death The Seminarist Trepak
Rachmaninov	In the silence of the night Do not depart All things depart Fate At the gates of a holy refuge Morning Christ is risen
Rimsky-Korsakov	Anchor Slowly my days drag by On the hills of Georgia The stormy day has passed If only you could Octave The Prophet
Rubinstein	Ballad (Before the magistrate) Persian love song
Sakhnovsky	What honour is there Death approaches In the bright day
Taneyev	Why does indignation boil in my breast? Dreaming woods It is not the wind blowing from the heights Night in the Scottish hills
Tosti	L'ultima canzone
Flies	Wiegenlied
Tchaikovsky	I bless you, forests Don Juan's serenade So soon forgotten The faint candle-light fades Darkness fell on the earth Golden cornfields None but the lonely heart Not a word, o my friend Frenzied nights Night ('Why do I love you?') Autumn Heroism Reconciliation Disenchantment A tear trembles The Nightingale During the ball

- Schubert
 A fearful moment
 It was in the early spring
 The lights in the room were extinguished
 You do not like me (I do not please you)
 Die Krähe.
 Der Doppelgänger
 An die Musik
 Der Lindenbaum
 Muth
 Aufenthalt
 Ihr Bild
 Das Wandern
 Der greise Kopf
 Ständchen
 Der Wanderer
 Am Meer
 Der Leiermann
 In der Fremde
 Ich hab' im Traum geweinet
 Die beiden Grenadiere
 Wenn 'ich in deinen Augen seh'
 Höre ich das Liedchen
 Ich grolle nicht
- Schumann

4. Russian Songs

- In the Zhiguli hills (arr. Triodin)
 Along the Petersky (arr. Triodin)
 The choice of a wife (arr. Makarov)
 Dubinushka
 There's a rock on the Volga
 The tempest rages
 There flew over the Volga
 On a high burial mound
 They don't let Masha go beyond the brook
 Night
 Walking once in a grove
 Sing gusli
 Farewell, joy
 A word of farewell (arr. Slonov)
 Mist over the valleys
 At the well
 Early grass
 Song of the Volga boatmen (Ei ukhnem)

5. Songs of Soviet Composers

- Blanter
 Partisan girl
 Song of Shchors
 Duvayevsky
 Song of the Fatherland

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Mokroysov	The sacred stone
	Falcons are flying
Novikov	Roads
Khrennikov	Songs from the film: "Six o'clock after the War":
	1. Artillerymen
	2. That's not the point, friends

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF RECORDED TITLES

ALL THINGS DEPART (RACHMANINOV) Op. 26, No. 15	
(RATHAUS)	138, 145
ALEKO (RACHMANINOV)	
SONG OF THE OLD GYPSY	115, 123, 124
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AN DIE MUSIK (SCHUBERT) (SCHOBART) D 547	45, 101, 141, 145
ANCHAR (RIMSKY-KORSAKOV) (PUSHKIN) Op. 49, No. 1	
(THE UPAS-TREE)	98
ARISE RED SUN (SLONOV)	53
ASYA (IPPOLITOV-IVANOV) SONG OF THE OLD MAN	136
AT THE BALL (TCHAIKOVSKY) (TOLSTOY) Op. 38, No. 3	136/144
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AUFENTHALT (SCHUBERT) D 957 No. 5	
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THE BARBER OF SEVILLE (ROSSINI)	
SCENE DR BARTOLO & DON BASILIO	132
DON BASILIO'S ARIA: LA CALUNNIA	109, 128, 132, 141, 146
DIE BEIDEN GRENADIERE (SCHUMANN) (HEINE)	
Op. 49, No. 1	141, 145
BORIS GODUNOV (MUSSORGSKY)	
SCENE IN THE CELL	106, 122
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ELLA GIAMMAI M'AMO . . . DORMIRO SOL	74, 103, 128, 146
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LE VEAU D'OR	27, 141
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ICH HAB' IN TRAUM GEWEINET (SCHUMANN)	
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THE GIBSONS TRIO

(or, Some records and collectors I have known)

by Allan J. Crane

No, this isn't going to be an article about a modern guitar ensemble or three celebrity singers new to discography. (A record new to discography will, however, be featured later in the article.) In the main, this is a tale of three collectors of historical vocal records who happen to live in the village of Gibsons. A few collectors and dealers will probably know that there are three such collectors there. Some may know of the village from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's longest-running television series, THE BEACHCOMBERS which is filmed here. (In the series, Gibsons is referred to by its old name, Gibson's Landing.) One of the collectors is a "beachcomber" in real life, but that is another part of the story.

Gibsons is a fishing village located on a sixty mile ribbon of British Columbia coastline known as the Sunshine Coast. Although the area is part of the coastal mainland northwest of Vancouver, access is by air or water only. Floatplanes carrying up to six passengers fly between Vancouver and the Sunshine Coast two or three times a day depending on the season, and government-run British Columbia ferries carrying up to two hundred automobiles and a thousand passengers make the crossing eight to eleven times each way daily.

The mainstay of the area's economy is a pulp mill, and this southern portion of the Sunshine Coast has a population of approximately 15,000. This figure doubles during the Summer months since the area is a popular tourist resort and many people have Summer homes here. (The northern Sunshine Coast centres around another mill town, Powell River, reached by another ferry.)

Gibsons itself has a population of only 2,500. With three collectors living within its boundaries, it must have about the highest per capita population of collectors in the world. People have wondered how this came to be, and our esteemed editor has gone so far as to speculate that perhaps one of us inoculated the others with a gramophone needle. It didn't happen quite like that. The three, in alphabetical order, are: Allan J. Crane, sometime oil refinery operator, teacher and journalist and the writer of this article; Gib Gibson, a boom man, not related to pioneer settler George Gibson after whom Gibson's Landing, later Gibsons, was named; and Dick Hammond, the "beachcomber".

I was born in 1931 in Birkenhead, Merseyside, sometimes referred to irreverently as a dormitory suburb of Liverpool (England) to which it is connected by the Mersey Tunnel. I started to collect records, mostly of marches, in 1947. While I was at school, however, I developed a great love for the music of that wonderful vocal writer Handel, and I gradually moved towards the collection of opera and concert singers, largely through the tutelage of Frank Modern whom I met at the short-lived Birkenhead Record Society. Not long after this, local record collectors started to gather each week around the E.M. Ginn machine in Frank Modern's living room where the virtues and/or limitations of numerous singers would be

illustrated with recorded examples and discussed and disputed. Occasionally, there would be guests from the Liverpool Verdi Society whose patron used to be, and perhaps still is, Tito Gobbi. Then, as now, the war of the tenors was often heated: Frank Modern championing Martinelli; Bernard Kenny, later my brother-in-law, proclaiming the cause of Lauri-Volpi; Jack Boylan and I extolling the virtues of John McCormack. Bjoerling, Gigli and other tenors had their champions too.

In 1952, I emigrated to Canada where I first lived in Toronto. I soon went west, however, settling in Vancouver in 1954. It was there in 1956 that I met Gib Gibson who was at the time the Superintendent of an export company selling logs to Japan. The search for records was taking us to the same junk shops and thrift stores, and a dealer told Gib about me.

Gib was born in North Vancouver in 1920. During World War II, he was stationed in England, and it was there that he first came into contact with records of opera singers. He did a little singing himself, with Grace Ball as his music teacher in Colchester. There he sang the part of Bastien in a performance of Mozart's *Bastien and Bastienne*. Throat cancer forestalled the furtherance of his singing, but when Gib returned to Vancouver after the War, he started to collect records concentrating at first on recordings of Jussi Bjoerling.

In the mid-fifties, Gib and I were in competition with one another for records, and I often used to call at his apartment near Vancouver's Stanley Park to see what he had spirited away before I got to the source. We both had our own special sources where we endeavoured to bribe, charm or cajole the help into keeping records aside for us. I felt that I had the TB Vets' thrift shop on Powell Street quite secure. One morning after night shift at the Shellburn Refinery, however, I went in, and the old dear whom I had been buttering up for months there produced from under the counter a single brown wax Canadian Grand Prize Victor: 89022, De Gogorza and Eames, *Trovatore*: "Mira d'acerbe lagrime". This was all that was left she told me apologetically. Her husband had already sold about fifty other "brown records", and it didn't take a Sherlock Holmes to discover where they had gone. Gib would have had the *Trovatore* duet too, but he didn't see that one.

At this time, Gib had a rather misguided habit which cost him what was certainly among the rarest records ever found in Canada although neither of us knew just what it was at the time. When I went into a rather unlikely place, B. C. Collateral and Loan, Vancouver's largest pawn shop, Gib had already seen about twenty old records there. He prided himself, however, on never paying more than fifty cents each for records. I did not hesitate to pay a dollar each for eight or nine 12" Columbias of 1907 vintage after bartering briefly, for some were marked at three dollars each. Three were of David Bispham on rarely seen first pressings, black and silver, and there were also tricolours of Arimondi and Van Rooy. Most interesting of all, though, was a plain black and silver Columbia with "Tacea la notte al placido", written in white ink on the label, nothing else. A record number was embossed at about 4 o'clock below the label. No matrix number was visible. From his numerical Columbia list, Don Jackson of Seattle, whom I had also met through a junk shop connection, identified

the embossed record number as belonging to the recording of Ciaparelli and Parvis, *Don Giovanni*, "La ci darem la mano". Ciaparelli did record "Tacea la notte", but under her married name (Gina Viafora) for Victor, not for Columbia. Don, who now owns this record (cracked – but that's another part of the story), enlisted the help of Aida Favia-Artsay to identify the record.

For those of you who have not already guessed, this record turned out to be a pressing of the unpublished Lillian Nordica, *Trovatore*, "Tacea la notte al placido". Both Dick and Gib have subsequently found items of a similar order of rarity.

The company for which Gib worked became bankrupt in 1958, and Gib moved to the Sunshine Coast where his parents lived. They moved away soon after this, but Gib has stayed here ever since working as a boom man, a man who sorts raw logs for sale according to their species. This involves walking along and across the logs in the water and moving them around to assess them. Gib's departure did not, however, herald a large influx of rarities into the Crane collection although I did find two of the 1903 Columbia Grand Opera Series: 1381, Schumann-Heink, "Leggiero invisible"; and 1197, Suzanne Adams, *Rome et Juliette*, "Je veux vivre".

(To be concluded)

THE CAREER AND RECORDINGS OF SYDNEY RAYNER

by

Michael F. Bott

Sydney Rayner came midway in a line of distinguished American tenors which began with Riccardo Martin and Francis MacLennan and continued with Hackett and Harrold, through Chamlee and Crooks, to Jan Peerce and Richard Tucker, the final custodians of virtues in the art of a tenor now seemingly lost in America. He was born in New Orleans where his English father* worked on the New Orleans Item, a local newspaper, on September 12th, 1895. His mother's family had deep American roots claiming kinship with Franklin Pierce, fourteenth President of the United States. Encouraged by his parents, Rayner studied the violin, played in a local dance band and after some vocal lessons, including a year's study as a baritone, broke into opera in 1924 as Araquil in a hometown production of Massenet's only verismo piece, *La Navarraise*, receiving \$100 for two weeks' work. Bouyed by his success, friends raised a loan and the tenor left for Milan and a period of study with maestro Ragusa. An appearance at a Fascist concert in 1926, earned him a gold medal from the Duce's brother and a year later he returned to the stage as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at the Teatro Adriano in Rome, enjoying a generally excellent reception:—

*The Rayners are of Viking origin, descendants of the Ragnars, a Norse family, who settled in England in the 9th century.

"Last night in La Bohème we had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of the tenor Sydney Rayner, an artist who is truly worthy of great praise as he is master of the stage, his temperament and fidelity of interpretation. He is endowed with a beautiful voice and with diction of diamond clearness which easily explains his brilliant triumph."

The Tribune (Rome) June 7th, 1927.

After successful engagements in Sicily the next two years were taken up with developing a repertoire and gaining experience in the opera houses of Florence, Milan and Turin; in Spain and Portugal.

In 1929, Rayner appeared in Tosca at the Staatsoper in Berlin drawing appreciative notices and in concert with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra:—

"Such thunderous applause as was accorded to Sydney Rayner of New Orleans tonight has seldom been heard in any Berlin Concert Hall. Professor Kunwald, Director of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra which accompanied Mr. Rayner told the New York Times correspondent that he had never heard such a grand and clear voice. Mr. Rayner who is the First Tenor of the Opéra-Comique, Paris was induced by the enthusiastic throng to sing many encores including two arias from Rigoletto."

New York Times (December 8, 1929 — Berlin Concert)

Hamburg and Hanover made a bid for his services, but he had already been engaged for the Paris Opéra-Comique where his debut took place on January 27th, 1930 as Julien in Charpentier's Louise, a rôle in which he was coached by the elderly composer. He remained a regular member of the Opéra-Comique for the next five years, appearing to increasing acclaim in Bohème, Tosca, Madame Butterfly, Carmen, Werther and Manon, opposite Emma Luart and fellow American Mary McCormic. During this period he was also heard in Belgium and Switzerland and in the French provinces at: Lyons, Rheims, Vichy, Lille, Rouen and Marseilles.

A memorable year, 1930 marked both Rayner's French debut, and his first important engagement in the United States*, an event surrounded with much interest. On September 12th, 1930 — his thirty-fifth birthday — the tenor made his debut at the San Francisco Opera as a much-praised Herod in Salome with Maria Jeritz and John Charles Thomas, later singing Canio in Pagliacci and his first Tannhäuser with the same protagonists:—

"The title rôle gave Sydney Rayner his greatest opportunity of the season and it did not find him wanting. There is a golden opulence in his voice that his previous rôles had not revealed to a similar extent and it is an organ capable of both lyric beauty and dramatic intensity."

Marjory M. Fisher, San Francisco News

*See Appendix A.

Soon after he repeated his San Francisco assignments with the Los Angeles Grand Opera Association, the ranks of which included both Gigli and Ezio Pinza. A concert in New Orleans on October 28th, 1930 provided the best kind of homecoming.

Between seasons in Paris Rayner was a frequent visitor to the United States appearing first with Gallo's San Carlo Opera Company as Don José in Carmen on October 13th, 1933 thus beginning an association with the itinerant San Carlo forces which would last until the stagione of 1946-47. In 1933 he also started a four year association with a company giving popular-priced opera at New York's giant Hippodrome theatre under the auspices of the impresario Alfredo Salmaggi.

After five years in Paris Rayner returned to the United States permanently in 1935, following a season in North Africa and a London recital. The Chicago Opera beckoned next and on November 23rd, 1935 the tenor made a successful Chicago debut in Tannhäuser with Grete Stuckgold. Early in 1936, Rayner and Ruth Miller appeared in the Canadian Grand Opera Association's Rigoletto in Toronto. The annual open-air summer seasons of opera at the Zoological Gardens in Cincinnati also claimed him in the 1930's and in 1938, Rayner triumphed in Rigoletto and La Bohème during a visit by the Cincinnati troupe to the Palacio de las Bellas Artes in Mexico City:

"Sydney Rayner, the great tenor from the Metropolitan Opera, who the night before last obtained another notable triumph in the rôle of the Duke of Mantua in "Rigoletto" appears in the leading rôle of "Rodolfo" in "La Bohème" by Puccini which will be staged tonight.

This great artist whose repertoire extends to more than forty operas sung in five languages has this very week sung in "La Tosca" and "Rigoletto" and tonight appears again as "Rodolfo" in "La Bohème" a rôle in which he has most celebrated performances.

Tomorrow, Sunday, Rayner will sing in "Carmen" in the company of Fidela Campina and Alfredo Chigi both of whom were extremely successful on the occasion of the previous presentation of this opera by Bizet such is the "tour de force" being undertaken by the great tenor of the Metropolitan Opera."

Excelsior (Mexico City) 1938

He returned to Mexico in 1943 when the singer Fanny Anitua founded the Opera Nacional:—

"Tenor, Sydney Rayner aroused the enthusiasm of the public with the outburst of despair that precedes the punishment of the unfaithful lover."

El Universal (Mexico City) October 28, 1943

An artist of international standing, it was inevitable that the Metropolitan Opera House would call upon his services and so Rayner made his debut in Carmen during the Met's 1936 spring season. After managing several assignments successfully, he was brought under a three year contract by

Edward Johnson and the following winter strengthened the favourable impression he had earlier created in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Manon*; again in *Carmen*, in *Aida*, where he was less successful, and in the *Tales of Hoffmann*:-

"The best performance in point of song and style that the gifted tenor, Sydney Rayner has yet done in New York's Opera House."

Olin Downes (New York Times)

On February 13th, 1937 Rayner was the *Des Grieux* to *Bidu Sayão's* stylish *Manon* when the noted Brazilian soprano made her Metropolitan Opera House debut, an event fortunately preserved for posterity on transcription discs:-

"The *Des Grieux* was Sydney Rayner who showed fully the resources of his uncommonly fine voice."

Olin Downes (New York Times) February 14, 1937

In the season of 1937-38, he continued to expand his repertoire at the Met adding *Faust* and *Pagliacci* before unfortunate differences with management over his other engagements resulting in a row with Johnson and St. Leger led to his premature departure. Nevertheless, an appearance at the White House in February 1940, signalled his standing as a native artist.

Rayner was again a member of the Chicago Opera in the seasons of 1941 and 1942, appearing in *Carmen*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Faust*, *Il Trovatore* and *Aida*. At the same time he also extended his activities in South America with performances at São Paulo and in Rio in 1941, where his companions included *Zinka Milanov* and *Bruna Castagna*, in a varied repertory which included the rôle of *Dimitry* in *Boris Godunov*. He was also extremely active in concert and on radio. The tenor appeared in *Weill's Street Scene* in 1947, and a film of *Caruso's* life was mooted by Paramount, but by the late 1940s his activities had slowed down a good deal and although he still sang in opera at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and elsewhere, he began to teach voice in New York which he continued until forced to retire by ill health in 1969. Sydney Rayner died at his home in Long Island, New York on September 14th, 1981 following a long illness.

Possessor of a large lyric tenor of appealing quality and warmth of tone he performed about 40 rôles ranging from the characters of *Verdi* and *Puccini* to *Caponsacchi* and *Tannhäuser*, although Mrs. Rayner recalls that he had mastered more than 50.

Rayner's recordings for *Sonabel* (Paris 1930-1931) and *Decca* (London 1932) capture his voice early in his career while it was still fresh and responsive. Few would disagree that he was most at home in the French repertory. Listening to the authoritative recordings of *Ah, fuyez*, *douce image* from the third act of *Manon* and arias from *Roméo et Juliette*, *Carmen* and *Werther*, it is easy to reconcile the substantial reputation he enjoyed in Paris. Complete live recordings of *Manon*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Carmen*, taken from off-the-air transcriptions captured in his Metropolitan period, find Rayner in some of his best rôles and show him to have been an exciting and committed performer.

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NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

The Musical Courier
 The Musical Leader
 Musical America
 The Tribune (Rome)
 New York Times
 San Francisco News
 The Record Collector
 Excelsior (Mexico City)
 Opera

SYDNEY RAYNER - DISCOGRAPHY

Sonabel Records - Paris 1930-1931

<i>Catalogue #</i>	<i>Face # & Matrix</i>	<i>Title and LP Reissue</i>
1. 12119	211231 50690	Tosca-E lucevan le stelle (I) C100
2. 12119	211231 50689	Pagliacci-Vesti la Giubba (F)
3. 12136	1232 50752	Martha-Air de Larmes (F)
4. 12136	1232 50753-B	Si vous l'aviez compris (Denza) (F)
5. 12137	1232 50754	Rigoletto-Questa o Quella (I) C100
6. 12137	1232 50755	Cavalleria Rusticana-Siciliana (I) C100

THE RECORD COLLECTOR

7. 12138	1232	1204	La Bohème—Que cette main (F) C100
8. 12138	1232	1205	Canta Per me (De Curtis) (I)
9. 12172	14632	50937	Werther—Je ne sais si je veille . . . O nature (F) C100 and Eterna 708
10. 12172	14632	50938	Werther—Lied d'Ossian . . . Pourquoi me réveiller (F) C100
11. 12173	14632	50939	Manon Lescaut—Donna non vidi mai (I)
12. 12173	14632	50940	Tosca—Ô des beautés égales (F)

Decca Record Company Limited — London 1932

13. F3327	F 40288	GB4647-3D	A Vucchella (Tosti) (I) with piano.
14. F3327	F 40288	GB4646-2D	Obstination (Fontanailles) with piano (I)
15. F3133	M423	GB4648-1D	I love life (Mana-Zucca) (E) with piano.
16. F3133	M423	GB4649-1D	Parted (Tosti) (E) with piano
17. 29001	K685	GA4722-2C	Werther—Un autre est son epoux! . . . J'aurais sur ma poitrine (F) C100
18. 29001	K685	GA4723-1C	Manon—Ah! Fuyez, douce image (F) C100
19. 29002	K677	GA4724-1C	Carmen—La fleur que tu m'avais jetée (F) C100
20. 29002	K677	GA4725-1C	Roméo et Juliette: Ah! leve- toi soleil (F) C100
21. F40293	M433	GB4749-2C	Les deux Sérénades Sérénade Francaise (F) (Leoncavallo)
22. F40293	M433	GB4750-2C	Elgie (Massenet) (F)
23. F40294	M437	GB4751-2C	Mattinata (Leoncavallo) (I)
24. F40294	M437	GB4752-2C	Première Caresse (de Cres- cenzo) (F)
25. F45020	M453	GB4753-2C	L'Africaine—O Paradis (F) C100 and Eterna 708
26. F45020	M453	GB4754-2C	Rigoletto—La donna è mobile (I) C100
27. K25003 K997 T205		GA5379-11D	La Bohème—Che gelida manina (I) A.N.N.A. 1043
28. K25005 K996 T204		GA5380-1D	Otello—Ora e per sempre addio (I) C100 and Eterna 761, Eterna 703

THE RECORD COLLECTOR

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|------|------------|---|
| 29. | K25003 K996 | T204 | GA5382-2D | Aida—Celeste Aida (I) C100 |
| 30. | K25005 K997 | T205 | GA5383-1D | Andrea Chenier—Un di all
azzurro spazio (I) C100 |
| 31. | K995 | T203 | GA5384-1D | La Traviata—De miei bollenti
spiriti (I) |
| 32. | K995 | T203 | GA5385-11D | Pagliacci—Vesti la giubba (I) |

The 29000 numbers are U.S. Decca

The F3000 numbers are French Decca

The K900, M400, K600 and T200 are English Decca.

Item # 21. Les Deux Sérénades is wrongly labelled Au Clair de la lune.

Lucky Strike Hit Parade Advertising Record 26 May, 1937 (Pressed by RCA Victor)

33. RCA Victor CS 06550 Spoken introductions (announcer and Rayner)
(Matrix P 06550-1) Pagliacci – Vesti La Giubba.

This item is believed to be from a WCBS broadcast.

Live Recordings Off-The-Air

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| January 9, 1937 | Carmen (Bizet) Metropolitan Opera House, New York
with Ponselle, Huehn, Bodanya et al C. Papi.UORC 209 |
| April 10, 1937 | Cavalleria Rusticana (Mascagni) Metropolitan Opera
House, New York with Rethberg, Morelli, Petina,
Kaskas et al C. Papi. OPA 1030 EJS 115.
Both the EJS and Opera Archives issues give a record-
ing date of May 10, 1937. |
| June 25, 1939 | Mefistofele (Boito) Cincinnati Zoo Opera, with
Norina Greco et al. Transcript from Cincinnati WLW
No 327 (excerpts). |
| February 13, 1939 | Manon (Massenet) Metropolitan Opera House, New
York with Bonelli, Sayão, Baromeo, et al. C. Abravanel |
| August 10, 1935 | WABC Concert: Mattinata (Leoncavallo)
Because (d'Hardelot)
Corengrato (Cardiferro-Cardillo)
O Paradiso (L'Africana-Meyerbeer) |
| Date unknown: | WOR from Carnegie Hall New York: E Lucevan le
Stelle (Tosca) and Solenne in quest' ora (La Forza del
destino) with unknown baritone. |

Murlyn Proficiency Records P107 (Circa 1952)

Sydney Rayner — Dramatic Tenor, Accompanied by Sally Leff Piano.
“For the student of music Sydney Rayner sings, accompanied by Sally Leff followed by Miss Leff’s solo accompaniments of the selections”.

Long Play Reissues of 78 rpm material

Celebrity Records C100 has the following items from the discography:

1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30.

Eterna Records # 708 “Famous French Tenors” has: 9.

Eterna Records # 761 “Verdi Arias by Great Tenors” has: 28.

A.N.N.A. Record Company # 1043 “The San Carlo Company of America” (1920–1955) has: 27.

APPENDIX A

A CHAT WITH SYDNEY RAYNER

On His Way to Los Angeles to Sing Tannhäuser and Salome

The American tenor, Sydney Rayner, who sang in Louise with Mary McCormic at the Opera Comique, Paris, last season with great success, arrived in New York recently, on his way to Los Angeles to sing with the opera company there. This, incidentally, marks his first important appearance in this country and much interest surrounds it.

The two operas for which Mr. Rayner was especially engaged are Tannhäuser and Salome, although he will also sing Pagliacci.

Born in New Orleans, Mr. Rayner went to Milan in 1925 for a year’s study. He sang the following year at a big concert for the Fascisti and received a medal in memory of the occasion. A year later he made his operatic debut in Rome, at the Teatro Adriano, in Bohème. He sang eight performances of this opera as well as La Gioconda. Milan then claimed him, as well as other parts of Italy, where he rounded out a fine Italian repertory.

In 1929 he was engaged to sing at the Opera Comique, but before commencing his engagement there he made a tour of Germany. In Tosca he earned instantaneous success at the Berlin Staats Oper (in German), also singing a concert there at Bachsaal, under the direction of Ernst Kunwald. Hanover and Hamburg made a bid for his services, but he was obliged to forego these offers for the time being.

Mr. Rayner created an excellent impression upon the Parisians in Charpentier’s Louise. Among those most delighted with the tenor’s portrayal of Julien was Charpentier himself, who later became very friendly with the singer and his little family. It was often a festive occasion indeed when the aged composer would invite Mr. Rayner and Mary McCormic for dinner somewhere in Montmartre and order everything from soup to nuts,

including various wines. He would then urge both to eat heartily, because their voices demanded it, while he confined his meal to eggs and lighter foods.

Mr. Rayner and Miss McCormic sang all the performances of Louise, the last being on July 31. The tenor also was heard in Werther. Manon, Carmen, Tosca and La Navarraise are in his repertory for next season. He has been engaged to sing at the Opera Comique from January, 1931, to September, 1932, but during that time will be allowed five months in which to sing in other places.

His engagement for Los Angeles resulted from David T. Babcock, of the Los Angeles Opera Association, hearing him in Paris last December. Mr. Babcock proposed that Rayner sing Tannhauser and Salome with the company, and although the tenor did not know either role, he said he would learn both, or anything else. He is that kind of a singer.

Mr. Rayner essays Tosca in three languages, Italian, French and German, — and laughingly commented to the writer that when an impresario calls him for Tosca, he asks: "What language, please?"

To Ragusa, in Milan, Rayner says he owes much vocally, and to Victor Chesnais in Paris, who has coached him in both the German and French roles.

Before returning to Europe in December, Mr. Rayner plans a concert in his home town, New Orleans, on October 28, probably fulfilling other dates as well.

In appearance, habits and ideas, Sydney Rayner is thoroughly American. He admits Europe is the place of atmosphere and, in his case particularly, for early routine, but he is happy and grateful for the opportunity to sing now in his own country. He is natural, regular and very much alive in his conversation — and impresses one with the fact that singing is a thoroughly enjoyable game, worth all the struggles and heartaches connected with it.

J.V.

The Musical Courier — September 27, 1930

APPENDIX B

SYDNEY RAYNER

OPERA COMPANIES — OPERA HOUSES

UNITED STATES

SAN CARLO OPERA COMPANY
METROPOLITAN OPERA COMPANY
CINCINNATI ZOO OPERA
BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC
SALMAGGI OPERA COMPANY
LOS ANGELES GRAND OPERA ASSOCIATION
HIPPODROME OPERA COMPANY
SAN FRANCISCO OPERA COMPANY
CHICAGO OPERA COMPANY

CANADA

CANADIAN GRAND OPERA ASSOCIATION
MASSEY HALL, TORONTO

FRANCE

THE OPÉRA-COMIQUE	— PARIS
THE GRAND THEATRE	— LYONS
	— RHEIMS
	— VICHY
THE GRAND THEATRE	— LILLE
THEATRE DES ARTS	— ROUEN
	— MARSEILLES

BELGIUM

THE GRAND THEATRE	— OSTEND
	— LIEGE
	— KNOCKE SUR MER

ITALY

TEATRO ADRIANO	— ROME
DAL VERME	— MILAN
	— TURIN
	— FLORENCE
	— CATANIA
	— SIRACUSA

MEXICO

PALACIO DE LAS BELLAS ARTES (OPERA NACIONAL)
MEXICO CITY

GERMANY

STAATSOPER	— BERLIN
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BRAZIL

TEATRO MUNICIPAL	— RIO DE JANEIRO
TEATRO MUNICIPAL	— SAO PAULO

SWITZERLAND

— GENEVA
— LUGANO

NORTH AFRICA

— TUNIS
— ALGIERS

APPENDIX C
SYDNEY RAYNER
REPERTOIRE

COMPOSER	WORK	PART
Bizet	Carmen	Don Jose
Boito	Mefistofele	Faust
Charpentier	Louise	Julien
Donizetti	Lucia di Lammermoor	Edgardo
Flotow	Martha	Lionel
Giordano	Andrea Chenier	Andrea Chenier
Gounod	Faust	Faust
	Roméo et Juliette	Roméo
Massenet	Manon	Des Grieux
	Werther	Werther
	La Navarraise	Araquil
Offenbach	The Tales of Hoffmann	Hoffman
Leoncavallo	I Pagliacci	Canio
Mascagni	Cavalleria Rusticana	Turiddu
Halévy	La Juive	Eleazar
Cilea	Adriana Lecouvreur	Maurizio
Ponchielli	La Gioconda	Enzo
Puccini	La Bohème	Rodolfo
	Tosca	Cavaradossi
	Manon Lescaut	Des Grieux
	Madama Butterfly	Pinkerton
Strauss	Salome	Herod
Yon	The Triumph of St. Patrick	St. Patrick
Hageman	Caponsacchi	Caponsacchi
Verdi	Un Ballo in Maschera	Riccardo
	Rigoletto	Duke
	Aida	Radames
	La Traviata	Alfredo
	Il Trovatore	Manrico
	La Forza Del Destino	Don Alvaro
Wagner	Lohengrin	Lohengrin
	Tannhäuser	Tannhäuser
Wolf-Ferrari	The Jewels of The Madonna	Gennaro
Guariano	Madamme Di Challant	Don Pedro
Weill	Street Scene	Street Vendor
Moussorgsky	Boris Godunov	Dimitry



SYDNEY RAYNER



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A study of this sort cannot be completed without a good deal of assistance. Thanks must go first to Mrs. Melanie Rayner of Long Island, New York, who not only responded patiently to my letters, but also provided photographs of her late husband, several pages of reviews, details of the off-the-air material and even some of the record numbers used in the discography. I enjoyed our correspondence and telephone conversations over more than a year and I am most grateful to her for a substantial amount of help. I hope that this article will go some way to rekindling interest in the recordings of a fine American tenor.

The singer's son, Eric Rayner, was contacted in New Orleans and my researches also allowed me to spend several hours with a former colleague, the tenor Mario Berini, in his New York studio.

The staff of the New York Library at Lincoln Center were helpful in locating reviews, while Maria Rich (Central Opera Service), and Stanton Golding, Cardell Bishop, Jim McPherson, Lim Lai and Martin Kalmnof added biographical information. Jim Peters, Lawrence Holdridge, Bill Moran, Roger Hewland and Michael Pinner assisted with the discography and I called upon the help of Nicholas G. V. Jones for translation of the material in Spanish. Sincere thanks are extended to all concerned.

Thanks to Syd Gray of Rubini Records, an LP reissue is being pressed at the time of writing.

Riddells Bay, Bermuda
December 1982.

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